



*Waste Pro*

February 1<sup>st</sup> – Garbage, Recycle  
February 8<sup>th</sup> – Garbage, Recycle,  
Yard Trash  
February 15<sup>th</sup> – Garbage, Recycle  
February 22<sup>nd</sup> – Garbage, Recycle,  
Yard Trash

Please call Waste Pro if you have any questions at 328-5445.

*Public Meetings*

February 9<sup>th</sup>, Tues – Zoning Board 5:30 p.m.; Code Board 5:45 p.m., Town Council 6:30 p.m. at Town Hall. For more information call Town Hall at 386-467-9800.

**February Meter Readings**



February meter readings will begin: Monday, February 15<sup>th</sup>.

**PLEASE HELP CONSERVE WATER!**



Remember: Water bill payments can be made anytime of the day or night, even on weekends, by using the "Utility Payment" drop box at the top of the stairs at Town Hall.

Clip This



The Town of Welaka Utility Department is available for water and sewer problems 24 hours a day at 467-8677. TDD 800/955-8771

*Special Days This Month:*

Tuesday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> – Groundhog Day



Sunday, February 14<sup>th</sup> – Valentine's Day



Monday, February 15<sup>th</sup> – President's Day

**\*\*\*Pay your Utility Bill Online:\*\*\***

<https://logicsolbp.com/TownofWelaka/login.aspx>



*Valentine's Day Word Search*

p c r h u k g v c  
j h h e h o l a s  
l o v e n m n l r  
d c t d a d a e e  
h o c i y r d n w  
k l u p b r t t o  
l a v u a d n i l  
y t s c r r m n f  
g e r w n a u e o  
r o m a n c e t q  
r y r a u r b e f

- 1. chocolate
- 2. love
- 3. flowers
- 4. valentine
- 5. cupid
- 6. candy
- 7. romance
- 8. February
- 9. card
- 10. heart

# What's Happening?

## WHAT IS HAPPENING?

Here we are coming up on a year plagued by COVID -19. Recently several things have happened in the county which affect us. As of today there are 10,000 people in Putnam County on the wait list for a vaccine. This will happen in time, but it just goes to show where we are, and what has happened in the last year.

To date, we have had five of our workforce members need to comply with safety protocols from association cases, and a couple of them have been on quarantine a second or third time. With such a limited workforce, anyone out in the office creates a drastic burden, but quarantine is a protocol that we must follow.

I personally miss the ability, even six feet apart, to discuss and involve myself with those of you in the community. It really becomes a hardship when you cannot have this closeness that existed prior to COVID. We just have to have an air of caution for the sake of safety. We do see the possibility of moving forward, but don't forget that it's been over a year. All we can say is please practice safety and bear with us. Using ZOOM is not the perfect way, but we are trying to stay in contact.

## JOHN STUART'S HOPE

My first contact with John was several years ago when he took a group of young boys and dominated the little league play in the neighboring counties as well as in Welaka. John had been in the nursery business and had just sold that. These young players received much of his free time. John had a knack with getting parents involved,

as well as the Town of Welaka. John worked for the town for a while before taking a job at the paper mill. All in all, he found that he really missed working here, and he decided to come back. Once we get away from COVID, maybe we can have a softball team again. This is certainly an area that we must watch as children do become frustrated with nothing more than cartoons and computer games to occupy their time.

Florida League of Cities offered the town a deep discount in insurance rates, especially workman's compensation, if we were to establish and use their safety program. This required a person that would persevere, and thanks to John, we are now fully compliant with this program with monthly safety meetings. During these stressful times, we are also adding instruction in customer service throughout the entire workforce.

Additionally, with John's past nursery experience, he has been of great assistance to Councilwoman Milledge and the Tree Committee. John is on very good terms with many local nurseries, and as a result, for two years now we have been able to plant a large number of trees given to the town which would otherwise have been discarded.



## BLACK HISTORY

Last year, COVID was just beginning in February. Nearly all of our celebrations of black history have been held at Jefferson Smith Park. Last year's weather was so bad it was diverted to St. James AME kitchen and dining room. We were not all masked up and we were there to enjoy a good meal. Being in an enclosed area there was a great

deal of reminiscing. This had to be the best celebration that I have ever attended when it comes to our history. Councilman Washington as well as I know him, still delved into insights in sixty years moving forward in Welaka. Sometimes quickly, sometimes almost a crawl, but never giving up. When we look at today's world, he is an exemplary person who we should be listening to, always trying and never stopping. Further, it helps to bring out more conversation as we delve deeply. There has been change, I don't wander through kitchens the way I used to. I have had some wonderful friendships that I would not trade for anything. Jamsie Primus just was a fantastic woman. Tried so hard to get her into a rehab home, but she always said someone needed it worse. Thelma Lee, almost the same way. Bob Donaldson, Dear George Barlow, many enjoyable times just reminiscing.

Still when you consider this history, look around. Early in the morning you find the younger people headed to work especially in the service industry. Pride in what they do putting themselves on the line especially nowadays. Then you have the group that have managed to make trucking a viable hard-working business. Let me tell you folks, there's just no fun anymore riding up and down these interstates every week. Bless these people that are so involved. It's hard to realize that four and five generations have managed to bring this town so far forward. Let's hope that we can continue to portray the abilities that we have. Many areas in this country could certainly enjoy a transfusion of this spirit. And to the rest of you in town, let a little bit of this history seep into your consideration about Welaka. It has not always been easy, but we attempt to move forward. Enjoy the date, it will be the 27<sup>th</sup> of February. It will be a glorified and enhanced day, a little different, but

not forgetting the reason for the celebration.



### FOOD STUFF

Well, here we go again, Harriet promised us that there were big things going to happen. As usual, it should work out as follows: the 4<sup>th</sup> of February, which is the first Thursday, will be our major food distribution. Additionally, the farm program is back in operation and on the 16<sup>th</sup> of February there will be perishables as well as dry goods delivered that will greatly enhance the community. For this delivery, if you feel that you could at all help, please let Harriet know because extra help is needed. We here at Town Hall endeavor to assist any way we can with these programs. We encourage you to use the facilities available.

Currently we have so much input besides just Helping Hands. Even with COVID, Friends of Welaka and others have become involved. Where would we be without the assistance of our Women's Club? Money anonymously showing up when we have needs, new refrigerators being bought, and encouragement. We had a wonderful Thanksgiving and Christmas thanks to the involvement of all these groups. Physical distributions under the safety guidelines places several of our people under serious cautions. We almost lost one of our primary workers to COVID. Not a senior, but a young person. Hospitalization, worrying about your young child, wondering if you are going to make it. It really takes a lot to feel so strongly about your neighbors. Keep an eye on Harriet's Facebook as she brings information forward. It seems that our reputation for caring is spreading.

### LIONS

COVID has shown no mercy on the Lions. We still attempt on the first and third Tuesdays of each month to have a meeting at noon at Shrimps R Us. As time progresses, we are moving slightly forward in membership. This is an organization that goes beyond our municipality, it is international. It does much good throughout the world, especially when it comes to eyesight and community projects. Thanks to one of the members of our local Lions, several children in Welaka received some of the finest hobby horses around. This member of Lions creates many of these toys, which are far beyond anything commercially available. Why not come down and have lunch with us some time? We might be able to help you get out of the doldrums. If you have questions, call Carl Harrell.



### CLEAN-UPS

Clearing brush and delving into the depths of the Forty Acre Park and other municipal properties is a lot easier when the temperature is 50 degrees instead of 90. Hopefully you will notice the workforce has made much progress in reclaiming certain corners of the town. Right-of-ways have been cut back, and valve protection barricades have been installed. If you know of an area that you feel we should be looking at, let us know. We are trying to create a neat, enticing thoroughfare through town. No matter what happens, as Sam McGauley has stated before, it pays well to present to the public a well-maintained town.

### GRANTS

Finally we have been able to issue a building permit to resolve the last client in our CDBG home improvement. This has to be one of

the hardest grants that I have ever been involved with. We felt we had the need, and we proved we had the need, but the input needed by the clients just did not get accomplished. Title problems, property with no wills left, inability to secure title, it was just a shame we could not accomplish more. But closing out this grant would help us get back into cycle.

James King Trail paperwork is finally accomplished and we will be moving forward for some modifications at the Vacuum Station in Sportsman's Harbor. This is a \$50,000 grant which will enhance the area greatly. As we have told you in the past two months, we are moving along rapidly on a \$750,000 and a \$3.8 million application for enhancement to utility and several general area projects and betterment. All of these are remedying situations that will be accomplished by a grant or have to be financed from within. Prior to the recession, we had committed nearly \$5 million for a new sewer system. This fell apart during the recession of 2006. Seldom in a lifetime do you get another chance to recoup and move forward without reaching into everybody's pockets. The town has maintained the same millage rate for several years, and water and sewer rates have also remained the same.



### TIRES AND MOSQUITOES

Why the heck are we talking about mosquitoes in February? Well sometimes it takes six months to make sure you are prepared. In developed areas it's a proven fact that tires with water in them create one of the major causes of mosquito larvae developing. We do have to figure out some way to remove these tires from town. Those involved will undoubtedly have to

pay some type of fee, but we hope that we can monitor it and resolve it before another mosquito season comes around. As an aside, my mother's first cousin was one of the major mosquito experts in the United States. During the Second World War, he was yanked out of the Harvard mosquito researched program, commissioned to Major, and assigned directly to General Patton in North Africa. Following the war, he spent the rest of his life researching Southeast U.S. mosquitoes. Just a little aside to show that I do know somebody.



**GOLF CARTS**

Folks, we have been with our tie-down, a little remiss on making sure that you are all licensed. Again, we bring to your attention that golf carts are not an entitlement but rather a privilege. Probably half of the town does not realize how we became a major golf cart area without a golf course. Make sure that the sticker on your cart is green, which is the only legal one. Make sure you have a driver's license. Side by sides make sure, don't mess up a good thing. We have allowed side by sides to become quite numerous. Capable of going much beyond 25 mph. Please show some caution and respect, don't mess up a really good thing. Enjoy it.

**INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT**

The Chief and I are finding to the point that Commissioner Pickens has been trying to accomplish updated interlocal agreements, especially when it comes to enclaves such as Beecher's Point, and Sportsman's Harbor. I cannot tell you exactly what the results will be, but the County Administrator and the County Attorney appear to be on board with us.

**HOW OLD IS OLD?**

When you're 92 years old and you're resolving problems here in town, you must be thinking much younger. Thanks to Rod Stringer for stepping forward and resolving somewhat the situation with the old Drug Store. I guess that is Rod thinking like he was 60. We appreciate this movement, it may not be perfect, but it's sure a step forward.

Folks, again, just do not let this dread COVID destroy our small municipality. We are quite fortunate nobody has passed here. Please, don't become so calloused that concern is forgotten. Here's a challenge for everybody: find a Valentine, make life happier, and have a good time in March. Don't forget to vote on March 2 at Town Hall.



**TOWN OF WELAKA  
ZONING BOARD MEETING  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2021  
@ 5:30 P.M.**

**WELAKA TOWN HALL/ZOOM**

1. The meeting was called to order by Allen Rusek at 5:30 p.m.
2. Roll Call: Kevin Finch – present, Allen Rusek – present, Clint Swartz – present, Harriet Vanslyke – absent, Les Thomas – present, Attorney Patrick Kennedy – present.
3. Approval of Minutes of Meeting of December 08, 2020. Finch asked if any deletions, corrections, or additions – there were none. Rusek motioned to approve Minutes of Meeting of December 20, 2020, second by Swartz. Motion carried 4-0.
4. Request to Speak – None
5. Audience Participation – None
6. Rusek motioned to adjourn at 5:40 p.m., second by Swartz. Motion carried 4-0

**TOWN OF WELAKA  
CODE ENFORCEMENT MEETING  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2021  
@ 5:45 P.M.**

**WELAKA TOWN HALL/ZOOM**

1. The meeting was called to order by Kevin Finch at 5:45 p.m.
2. Roll Call: Kevin Finch – present, Allen Rusek – present, Clint Swartz – present, Harriet Vanslyke – absent, Les Thomas – present, Attorney Patrick Kennedy – present.
3. Approval of Minutes of Meeting of December 8, 2020. Finch asked if any deletions, corrections, or additions – there were none. Rusek made a motion to approve Minutes of Meeting of December 08, 2020, second by Swartz. Motion carried 4-0.
4. Old Business: None
5. Request to separate Stringer property across from Front Street. The separated property will be a seventy-seven (77) wide parcel which is one (1) foot away from existing structure. The property will stay C1. Property is due to have an inspection on Wednesday 01/21/2021. Thomas made a motion to approve the separation of the property, second by Swartz. Motion carried 4-0.
6. Request to Speak – None
7. Audience Participation – None
8. Rusek motioned to adjourn at 6:00 p.m., second by Swartz. Motion carried 4-0.



**TOWN OF WELAKA  
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 12, 2020  
@ 6:30 P.M.**

**WELAKA TOWN HALL/ZOOM  
MEETING**

1. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Sands at 6:30 p.m.
2. Invocation was given by Finch.
3. Pledge of Allegiance led by Washington.
4. Roll Call: Mayor Gordon Sands - present, Councilman Willie Washington - present, Councilman

Jamie Watts - present, Councilwoman Jessica Finch - present, Councilwoman Marianne Milledge - present, and Attorney, Patrick Kennedy - present.

5. Approval of Minutes of Meeting of December 08, 2020. Sands asked if any deletions, corrections, or additions - there were none. Finch motioned to approve Minutes of Meeting of December 08, 2020, second by Watts. Motion carried 5-0.

6. Request to Speak: None

7. Code and Zoning Recommendations: None

8. Utility Matters: None

9. Town Matters:

Mayor Sands: Report Update on Grant Applications – Sands stated that currently we have one (1) Housing Rehabilitation open so far. Perhaps tomorrow when the Contractor sits down with the Building Official, we can get a building permit for this property. In regard to our Hardening Grants, Sands stated that we currently have an up-to-date engineering work on all three (3) grant applications. They are moving along. Sands stated that there are many here within the State, and we scored very high. We should be seeing some results done by a zoom-type situation for the inspection here this month. All grants total is nearly four (4) million dollars of applications. Let us not let it go to waste. Are there any questions on these grants and where were headed with them in?

Councilwoman Milledge Report: Welaka Village Report – Milledge stated that the Maintenance Department did an incredible job of cleaning up the pond off of Oakridge Drive. It is looking really nice. The pond off of 308 still could use a little bit of maintenance. Milledge stated that it was her understanding that we may be getting some more donations of trees probably in the spring. So, we are going to look forward to that if that actually happens. Milledge stated that the trees in Town that were planted are looking pretty. So,

you just got a whole new ecosystem going on over there that's kind of interesting to watch.

Councilwoman Finch Report: Update on Historical Meetings:

Finch stated that normally we try to meet once a month because of everything that's been going on it's been less than that, but we did meet the requirements to be certified local government authorities. Basically, we submit paperwork on a yearly basis. Finch stated that we did have enough meetings this past year, and they're being more lenient because they understand the circumstances so we submitted that we should be good to go for this. Finch stated that for this coming year will have to get a few more meetings on the agenda.

Councilman Washington Report: none

Councilman Watts Report: none

10. Audience Participation: none

11. Police Matters: None

12. Attorney Matters: Settlement of Rutkiewicz Petition (Case No: 20-183CA) – Patrick Kennedy stated that regarding our public records lawsuit, we believe that we have complied with a public record request as of December 9<sup>th</sup>. He stated that we were going to try to resolve this matter without using the courts if we can. Kennedy stated he asked Brian, our IT guy, to go deeper and see what he could do to recreate the records from the database from the computer. The Petitioners Counsel has provided the fees and cost to date of \$6,519.85 which represents a little more than 20 hours of Attorney's work at a rate of \$275 an hour. Kennedy stated that he is not asking you to accept settlement at \$6,600, but he is asking for settlement authority within the boundaries of their max. Kennedy stated that he does believe we have some offsets for the effort we had to put in and producing the documents. Watts made a motion to authorize Mayor Sands along with Town Attorney Patrick Kennedy to reach a settlement agreement up to \$6,600

for Case Number 20 – 183CA subject to Council being apprised of what is taking place prior to final approval of the settlement agreement on the amendment, second by Finch. Motion carried 5-0.

13. Watts made a motion to adjourn at 7:07 p.m. second by Finch. Motion carried 5-0.



Woman's Club of  
Welaka is having a  
**YARD SALE**

February 12 and 13  
8:00 – 2:00  
644 C.R. 309

We may have your  
heart's desire! (after all,  
it will be Valentine's  
Day...)

Hot dog lunches  
available



Come shop with us!  
\*\*\* A portion of all  
proceeds will be  
donated to charities  
supported by our club

\*\*\*



Date: Wednesday, February 10<sup>th</sup>

Where: Shrimp R Us Pavilion

Time: 6 p.m.

Moderator: John Maluda

Host: Friends of Welaka

Council Forum: Janis Brown- Stallings  
Tonya F. Long  
Marianne Milledge

Mayoral Forum: Pam Olson  
Gordon L. Sands  
Jamie D. Watts



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**Official General Election Ballot**  
**March 2, 2021**  
**Town of Welaka**  
**Putnam County, Florida**

**Balota Oficial de la Elección General**  
**2 de marzo de 2021**  
**Pueblo de Welaka**  
**Condado de Putnam, Florida**

- 
- **Instructions:** To vote, fill in the oval ( ● ) completely next to your choice.
  - Use only the marking device provided or a black or blue pen or marker.
  - If you make a mistake, ask for a new ballot. Do not cross out or your vote may not count.
  - **Instrucciones:** Para votar, llene por ( ● ) completo el ovaló que está al lado de su selección.
  - Use solamente el dispositivo paramarcas provisto o una pluma o plumón negro o azul.
  - Si comete un error, pide una balota nueva. No tache porque su voto podría no contarse.
- 

<b>Mayor</b> (Vote for One)
<b>Alcalde</b> (Vote por Uno)
<input type="radio"/> Pam Olson <input type="radio"/> Gordon L. Sands <input type="radio"/> Jamie D. Watts
<b>Town Council Member</b> (Vote for Two)
<b>miembro del ayuntamiento</b> (Vote por Dos)
<input type="radio"/> Janis Brown-Stallings <input type="radio"/> Tonya F. Long <input type="radio"/> Marianne Milledge

Precinct 4 - Town of Welaka      Ballot ID: 5001